

Mission:

To protect, promote & improve the health of all people in Florida through integrated state, county & community efforts.



Rick Scott
Governor

John H. Armstrong, MD, FACS
State Surgeon General & Secretary

Vision: To be the Healthiest State in the Nation

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FLORIDA DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH RECOGNIZES HEALTHY WEIGHT COMMUNITY CHAMPIONS

DAYTONA BEACH – The Florida Department of Health in Volusia County applauds the efforts of three Volusia County communities that are being recognized statewide as Healthy Weight Community Champions.

2014 Healthy Weight Community Champions:

City of New Smyrna Beach

City of Ormond Beach

Town of Ponce Inlet

"We are delighted that three of our communities are being recognized as Healthy Weight Community Champions," said Dr. Bonnie J. Sorensen, director, Florida Department of Health in Volusia County. "With one out of three children now considered to be overweight and 65 percent of adults at an unhealthy weight, it is time to work together to improve the health of our entire community."

The City of New Smyrna Beach is being recognized for creating and implementing Florida's first Mayor's Fitness Challenge. A local coalition including students, health systems, fitness centers and other community businesses was formed to support the challenge. The Mayor's Fitness Challenge has been packaged and offered to surrounding cities and has grown to 1000 participants strong in Volusia County.

The City of Ormond Beach is being recognized for multiple accomplishments. The city has adopted a multi-modal transportation strategy that has established level of service standards for sidewalks, trails, and bus service. Developers pay a multi-modal fee instead of a road impact fee to support alternative transportation modes to the automobile. The fees go toward adding sidewalks that prevent barriers to transit stops and major destinations, additional bus shelters, and improving the frequency of bus service.

In 2013, the City of Ormond Beach launched its first Mayor's Health and Fitness Challenge with a 12-week program open to residents and workers and includes: before and after biometrics; 3-months of YMCA access; free and reduced rate classes at local fitness centers; special menu items at local restaurants; free meal preparation sessions with recipes and coaching. City employees receive free gym access through their insurance program and an employee wellness day is held annually. The city manager hosts a monthly "Walk with the Manager" where residents join the manager on a two-mile walk throughout the community. Residents have free city-run gyms and weight rooms. At events

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sponsored by the City of Ormond Beach, the city uses food and beverage vendors who offer varied healthy options.

The Town of Ponce Inlet is being recognized for maintaining a network of sidewalks along the major roads and in many residential streets requiring a Complete Streets approach to all new and redeveloped roads. In addition, the Atlantic Ocean beaches within town limits is part of the designated "World's Most Famous Beach" walking trail. Finally, many of the Town's parks feature networks of hiking/walking trails and walkways through natural dune systems, wetlands, and forest.

The Town of Ponce Inlet is currently considering amendments to its development requirements to allow vegetable gardens in front yards and to allow fruit trees to count toward meeting minimum landscaping requirements. The Town and a local health club co-sponsored a month long event called *Shape Up Ponce Inlet* in November 2013 featuring zumba, boot camp and yoga.

Between November 2013 and February 2014, local governments were invited to submit best practice policies they have implemented to promote physical activity and improve nutrition in their jurisdictions. These "best practice" policies are exemplified by the Healthy Weight Community Champions. A list of the Champion Communities and best practices can be found below and online at: www.HealthiestWeightFL.com.

"Efforts to improve health are often most effective at the local level and the Department wants to recognize the outstanding progress made by these communities to promote healthy weight," said State Surgeon General and Secretary of Health Dr. John Armstrong. "The commitment of these municipalities and counties affect nearly 9.4 million Floridians and help further statewide collaborative efforts to make Florida the healthiest state in the nation."

The Community Champions program is part of the Department of Health's Healthiest Weight Florida initiative. Healthiest Weight Florida is a public-private collaboration bringing together state agencies, local governments, not-for-profit organizations, businesses, schools, faith-based organizations and entire communities to help Florida's children and adults make consistent, informed choices about healthy eating and active living. To learn more about Healthiest Weight Florida, please visit www.HealthiestWeightFL.com.